



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH AND WILDLIFE

May 20, 2022

In reply refer to: ECF-4

To: People Interested in the Johnson Creek Artificial Propagation Enhancement Program

NMFS has issued a final environmental assessment (EA) to support making determinations under the Endangered Species Act Section 4(d) for the continued operation and maintenance of 15 hatchery programs in the Snake River Basin in Idaho. Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), as a cooperating agency for the development of this EA, has issued a decision for their portion of the Proposed Action, as to whether BPA will continue to provide funding to the Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho (Nez Perce Tribe) for the Johnson Creek Artificial Propagation Enhancement (JCAPE) program and the quantity of fish production that would occur with that funding. The hatchery program helps supplement the Johnson Creek summer Chinook salmon population which has a low number of naturally spawning fish and low productivity. This letter describes BPA's decision, the implementation schedule and how to obtain additional information.

Background:

To understand the potential environmental impacts of this proposal, NMFS, in cooperation with BPA, prepared an EA that analyzed BPA's proposed continued funding of the JCAPE program, including a potential production increase of 50,000 juveniles, as well as a no-action alternative under which BPA would no longer fund the program, and a Reduced Production Alternative in which 50 percent of the production levels described in the Hatchery Genetic Management Plan would be funded for the JCAPE hatchery program. NMFS released the draft EA for public review and comment in June 2019. No comments were received pertaining to the JCAPE program. Based on the EA analysis and mitigation measures to help lessen impacts, BPA has found that the project will not cause any significant impacts and, therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

BPA's funding activities would include the continued operation and maintenance of a temporary adult Chinook salmon trap and weir; adult holding and spawning at the South Fork Salmon River Satellite; egg incubation and juvenile rearing of JCAPE fish at McCall Fish Hatchery; transportation of broodstock, eggs, and smolts between facilities; and the direct release of smolts into Johnson Creek.

To inform these hatchery actions, BPA would also fund research, monitoring, and evaluation (RM&E) activities, such as fish tagging and marking; spawning ground surveys; fish capture, including rotary screw trap collection; and habitat quality, such as water temperature data collection in the South Fork Salmon basin.

Decision: BPA has decided to continue to fund the Nez Perce Tribe to operate the JCAPE Program, including an increase in smolt production from 100,000 to 150,000. Increased broodstock production activities to support the additional 50,000 juveniles are expected to begin in June 2022.

Copies Available: The final EA and FONSI are available on BPA's website at www.bpa.gov/nepa/Johnson-Creek-Propagation. If you previously requested a copy of the documents, they

are enclosed. If you would like to obtain paper copies of these documents, please call our toll-free document request line at 1-800-622-4520; leave a request naming this project and giving your name and complete mailing address.

For More Information: If you have questions regarding the environmental process, please contact me at 503-230-5206, or by e-mail at casharp@bpa.gov. You can also reach us toll free at 1-800-622-4519.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/ Carolyn Sharp

Carolyn Sharp

Environmental Protection Specialist

Enclosures (if requested):

Final EA

FONSI